Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A bipolar transistor, comprising:

a first semiconductor region of a first conductivity type defining a collector region;

a second semiconductor region of a second conductivity type defining a base region;

a third semiconductor region of said first conductivity type defining a emitter region; and

a metal layer providing contacts to said base and emitter regions;

wherein the transistor has a specific area resistance less than ~~500mQhms-mm^2~~; 500mOhms mm^2;

and

wherein said metal layer has a thickness greater than 3μm.

2. (Original) A bipolar transistor according to claim 1, wherein the metal layer has a thickness no less than 4μm.

3. (Previously Presented) A bipolar transistor according to, claim 1 wherein the metal layer has a thickness no less than 6μm.

4. (Previously Presented) A bipolar transistor according to, claim 1 wherein the emitter region defines a first surface, the base region extending to said surface in locations defined by apertures through emitter region, said metal layer overlying said first surface.

5. (Original) A bipolar transistor according to claim 4, wherein adjacent apertures are spaced less than 100μm from each other.

6. (Canceled)

7. (New) The bipolar transistor according to claim 1, wherein an increase in the thickness of the metal layer corresponds to a reduction in a voltage drop in the contacts to said base and emitter regions.

8. (New) The bipolar transistor according to claim 7, wherein the reduction in the voltage drop in the contacts is proportional to the increase in the thickness of the metal layer.